TASK FORCE RUSSIA -- BIWEEKLY REPORT 12-25 SEPTEMBER 1992 6TH REPORT

TASK FORCE RUSSIA (POW/MIA)

REPORT TO THE U.S. DELEGATION, U.S.-RUSSIAN JOINT COMMISSION ON POW/MIA

25 SEPTEMBER 1992

HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS

This report has been prepared for the use of the Commission in pursuit of our mission. While it is an unclassified document in accordance with Department of Defense classification guidelines for POW/MIA information, it nonetheless contains casualty-related information and should not be disseminated outside of Commission channels pending efforts by the Department of Defense Executive Agent to locate and notify as many of the next of kin as feasible.

BIWEEKLY REPORT ON SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES

TASK FORCE RUSSIA (POW/MIA)

Period of Report: 12 Sept--25 Sept 1992

1. SUMMARY: The highlight of the reporting period was the Moscow meeting of the US-Russian Joint Commission. Although the meeting did not resolve any cases of unaccounted-for U.S. service members, an initial assessment indicates that the Commission may now receive increased access to some archival sources and that the Russian side is open to an expanded program of on-site visits to local archives and camps. The Russians stated that continuing archival investigations have uncovered no evidence whatsoever of the transport of U.S. Korean or Vietnam War POWs to formerly Soviet territory. The information provided by the Russian side on Cold War shootdowns was incomplete and disappointing. The U.S. side discussed a growing amount of credible evidence that at least a limited number of Korean War POWs were transferred to the Soviet Union, stating further that key Cold War incidents had either not been addressed or had not been adequately investigated by the Russian side. Potentially significant archival documents were transferred to the U.S. side, although not all of the documents mentioned by the Russian side were delivered. Some internal divisions and a lack of coordination were evident on the Russian side. President Yeltsin signed an order to the ministries of Security, Defense, Internal Affairs and Foreign Affairs directing full cooperation with the future efforts of the Commission. Task Force Russia's Washington office actively supported the Commission meeting and, additionally, continued to research high interest issues, such as the actual identities and disposition of the four service members reported by ABC's "20/20" program as being buried in Odessa.

2. UPDATE ON ISSUES FROM PREVIOUS REPORTS:

A. The U.S. Delegation to the Joint Commission raised the issue of non-cooperation on the part of Russian security and military intelligence agencies [Recommendation, Biweekly Report, 11 Sept. 1992. Details in paragraph 3 below.

B. Members of the U.S. Delegation travelled to Khabarovsk in the final phase of the meeting tRecommendation, Biweekly Report, 11 Sept. 1992]. Details in sub-paragraph 6-D below.

C. Yuri Smirnov, member of Russian Parliament and head of the sub-committee on POW/MIA affairs, according to his own relayed testimony, had been warned off of the search for U.S. POWs in the former Soviet Union. Smirnov was told, "You're working too hard on the subject and should back off." Smirnov also claimed that mail delivered to his parliamentary box was first delayed, then the volume decreased, and, finally, the mail stopped. Previously, Smirnov had been receiving what he felt was a substantial volume of mail related to foreigners in the GULAG system. Smirnov also reportedly claimed that other parliamentarians working this issue were also threatened, but that all were reluctant to go public.

D. Major Amirov cannot be found. He is a promising source of information who is affiliated with parliamentarian Smirnov and who has reported interviews with retirees claiming first-hand observation of the transport of U.S. POWs from Indochina to the Soviet Union. When queried, the Soviet side claimed that, due to the confusion at large in the former Soviet Union, they even have difficulty finding their own people. An independent U.S. researcher who had also been working with Amirov has had no better luck in locating him. [Analyst's note: Given that Amirov is a name of Turko-Islamic origin, Amirov may, indeed, have temporarily vanished into the confusion of regional conflicts burning from the Caucasus to the Sino-Russian border. He may, for instance, have joined the new military establishment of the republic in which his family has its roots. Nonetheless, TFR considers the effort to interview Amirov in depth an ongoing matter.]

E. Viktor Pugantsev, a source whose reports on "David Marken" have proven difficult to verify, re-contacted TFR-Moscow with a claim that he continues to be harassed. tPugantsev last mentioned in Biweekly Report 11 Sept 92.

F. TFR-Washington continues in efforts to supply Russian side with pertinent, detailed data on unaccounted-for U.S. service members, in accordance with ongoing Russian requests.

G. TFR continues to follow up leads from the ABC "20/20" broadcast [Biweekly Report 11 Sept. 92]. Efforts to contact sources within the former Soviet Union continue in coordination with the Department of State. The research effort to positively identify and track the four Americans "20/20" claimed lay buried under Soviet soldiers in Odessa followed the course projected in the last Biweekly (11 Sept. 92). We have confirmed that three of the four Americans had been temporarily interred in Odessa and were then exhumed and the remains repatriated, following which the empty graves clearly were re-used for Russians. The fourth case appears identical to the others, except that we have not yet been able to verify the repatriation of his remains (although his widow had been informed of his place of burial in Odessa). In order to provide the details uncovered and to illustrate the working methodology of TFR-Washington researchers, the steps taken to find the "Odessa Four" are detailed below:

(1) In early August, TFR-Moscow received information on four alleged U.S. POWs buried in Odessa from ABC's "20/20" staff. The four names passed were "Luk (sic) Timmerman, Ted Yates, Richard Larsom, and Alberto Kairo."

(2) TFR initially searched the files of the U.S. Army Center for Mortuary Affairs (CMAO) and tentatively identified two service members: Lyle Timmerman and Ted Yates. The CMAO files record that the remains of both had been returned to U.S. control and buried temporarily in the U.S. military cemetery at Neuville- en-Condroz, near Liege, Belgium. They were later exhumed and re- buried according to the wishes of the next of kin (Timmerman in New York, Yates in Colorado). A TFR translation of Russian documents [TFR-2-75 listing those German-held U.S. POWs who died while in Soviet custody after liberation by the Red Army listed both men as killed by the collapsing wall of a bombed-out building on 19 March 1945 while awaiting transshipment to Marseilles, France. [Analyst's note: TFR has absolutely no reason to suspect foul play in these deaths.]

(3) The third reported individual, Richard Larsom, was identified in the CMAO files as Richard C. Larsen. Larsen had also been interred at Neuville-en-Condroz. TFR-Washington next requested a files review by the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) on all three service members identified thus far. The files on Timmerman and Yates were quickly located and confirmed that they had died as reported by the Russian archival documents. The file on Richard C. Larsen, which arrived at TFR-Washington during the compilation of this Biweekly Report, positively identifies the subject as Chief Officer Richard C. Larsen, U.S. Merchant Marine, who died of coronary thrombosis in his stateroom aboard his ship while it lay at anchor off Odessa on 29 March 1945. His remains were initially interred in the Second Christian Cemetery, Odessa, and were later repatriated to the U.S. military cemetery at Neuville-en-Condroz, where they were permanently interred in accordance with the wishes of his spouse.

(4) A RAND corporation researcher surfaced a 6 May 1948 State Department letter to the Soviet Government identifying these three deceased service members by name and place of burial (the Second

Christian Cemetery, Odessa) and requesting the return of their remains.

(5) The name "Alberto Kairo" proved to be the most challenging. The data on this individual did not match that of any service member who perished during World War II. TFR-Washington analysts hypothesized that, due to his absence from the roles of the combat services, as well as to his age, "Kairo" might have served in the Merchant Marine. Upon cuing, NPRC discovered an out-of-the-way file on an Alberto Cairo who had been turned down for membership in the US Merchant Marine Naval Reserve in 1941, due to medical reasons. Reasoning that standards had fallen in the course of the war, a TFR-Washington analyst next asked the Coast Guard to review its Merchant Vessel Personnel (MVP) files. Within minutes, the Coast Guard located a file entry on Alberto Cairo. His birth year and date of death were identical to those given by the Russian Archival records. Receipt of the full file by TFR showed that Chief Engineer Cairo, U.S. Merchant Marine, had died of apparent heart failure while on a brief shore leave in Odessa on 20 October 19i6. He was, indeed, interred in the Second Christian Cemetery in Odessa, and his widow received notification of the disposition of his remains, although there was some delay, due to difficulty in locating her. The single remaining issue at this time is whether or not Cairo's remains were ever repatriated. TFR is pursuing this question.

(6) Summary Table:

TIMMERMAN, LYLE RESOLVED INTERRED IN NEW YORK

YATES, TED RESOLVED INTERRED IN COLORADO

LARSEN, RICHARD C. RESOLVED INTERRED IN LIEGE, BELGIUM

CAIRO, ALBERTO RESOLVED FINAL BURIAL SITE TO BE VERIFIED

3. SIGNIFICANT INTERVIEWS AND MEETINGS ATTENDED: The working sessions attendant to the meeting of the Joint Commission provided the primary focus for TFR during the reporting period. Key aspects are described below. The use of quotation marks indicates the exact words of the participant.

A. Presentation of General Dmitri Volkogonov. Volkogonov stated:

(1) While there have been no "important discoveries," the archival search continues. This effort should be completed by year's end. [Analyst's note: See 3.A.(11) below. General Volkogonov was not entirely clear on what would be completed by year's end. The implication was that the search of the central archives would be finished, with any additional searches shifting to provincial archives. As reported below, however, some archivists in the central facilities told Commission members from the U.S. side that they had only recently begun their research.]

(2) Volkogonov stressed the need to explore alternative search methods. The Commission should: exploit mass communications in an effort to reach possibly knowledgeable sources; strengthen ties to public organizations, such as humanitarian groups and veterans' associations; and seek out Korean War and Vietnam War era veterans for interviews. Volkogonov felt strongly that efforts such as the abortive and misreported Borovoi/Perot monetary reward initiative do far more harm than good.

(3) "No documents have been found in intelligence files to support the thesis that U.S. Vietnam or Korean War POWs were transported to the USSR."

(4) The Russians would like a copy of the film made during the raising of sections of the Soviet submarine lost in 1968.

(5) President Yeltsin signed an order to seven ministries directing full cooperation with the Commission.

(6) President Yeltsin told the general that, should he perceive any official to be uncooperative, he should notify Yeltsin personally.

(7) President Yeltsin is convinced that the Bush administration is more serious about the POW/MIA issue than were previous U.S. administrations.

(8) The fates of Cold War air crews must be pursued further; specifically, the security services and border guards must dig deeper and the records of the {analyst's comment: probable Air Defense] Central Command Post must be searched.

(9) Research in the archives of the convoy escort troops has only just begun.

(10) More research must be done in regard to the camp system in the Urals.

(11) After the central archival search is completed at year's end, the local archives pertinent to the far-flung GULAG system should be searched, with special attention to the special camps for foreigners. Special orders would be prepared authorizing this.

(12) President Yeltsin will issue an official report on results to date at the end of October. In support of this, the U.S. side should share their results with the Russian side.

B. Presentation of Vyacheslav Mazurov, Russian Foreign Intelligence Service (FIS) representative. Mazurov stated:

(1) Primakov, the FIS director, had ordered a 100% search of FIS archives.

(2) The old KGB archives contain no information on Cold War shootdowns.

(3) Neither the North Koreans, nor the Chinese, nor the Vietnamese would ever permit Soviet intelligence officers to interrogate Americans.

(4) The FIS is prepared to respond to specific, detailed queries from the U.S. side.

(5) The FIS believes that some U.S. pilots used false names and passports/ID's. "The CIA must be more open. We want to be more open, and we need more openness on your side."

(6) If the U.S. side holds evidence that Soviets conducted interrogations in Korea or Vietnam, it should be given to the Russian side.

(7) "There is not a single document in our files--not one--that supports the contention that U.S. POWs were transported to the territory of the USSR during either the Korean War or the Vietnam War.

(8) The Commission should ask the Ministry of Defense about all shootdown incidents.

(9) "We can't ask the Chinese, North Koreans or Vietnamese about your POWs. You know what response they would give us."

(10) There are privacy laws preventing the FIS from querying former intelligence officers; further, new legal restrictions exist regarding the declassification of information. [Analyst's Comment: If true, this is new information to TFR.]

C. Presentation of Alexander Sevets, GRU archives representative. Sevets stated:

(1) There is no evidence in the GRU files that GRU officers had any direct contact with U.S. POWs in Korea or Vietnam.

(2) The GRU did receive interrogation reports from the Chinese, who had interrogated U.S. prisoners in Korea.

(3) "Unfortunately, we do not have documents from the Vietnam War proving we did not interrogate Americans as we do from Korea.

(4) GRU relations with the Vietnamese were not good, and travel and contacts were restricted. Relations with the North Koreans were much better.

(5) "I know you won't believe me, but we really did not have contacts with your POWs in Vietnam. You might think this was a perfect recruitment opportunity for us to bring some POWs to the USSR, but this just didn't happen."

(6) "I cannot exclude indirect participation of GRU personnel in Korean War interrogations."

NOTE: At this point in the proceedings, a U.S. member of the Commission stated that the U.S. had information from two former Soviet soldiers who claimed they had interrogated U.S. POWs during the Korean War. This led to a "blunt" exchange, with FIS representative Mazurov aggressively entering the discussion without a factual grasp of exactly what information the U.S. had obtained and the legitimate methods used to obtain it. It was immediately apparent that information available to elements of the Russian side had not been broadly disseminated or critically appraised. Details of the sources and testimonies were later provided, and, as of this writing, there is a preliminary indication that one of the sources, Colonel (Retd.) Korotkov, has been contacted and counseled by a FIS representative, after which he revised his testimony during a follow-on interview with TFR members. Details, as available, will be published in the next Biweekly Report.

D. Presentation of Colonel Viktor Mukhin, Chief, Historical Archives Department, Historical Archives and Military Memorial Center, Russian General Staff. Mukhin stated:

(1) "We have information on nine cold war shootdowns. We need your information to assist in researching this area."

(2) "We hold the archives of the (Soviet) 64th Air Corps from Korea. Our archival information indicates that Russian military or Ministry of Defense (MOD) personnel did not participate in interrogations. The reports we hold of 59 U.S. POWs who were interrogated are signed by Chinese and North Korean personnel." [Note: the list of 59 was passed to the U.S. at the table.]

(3) "We have no information on the Vietnam War in our files."

(4) The records of advisors are in the MOD archives from the Korean War. They [the archives] contain air force units as well, but nothing on POWs.

(5) Access to interrogation reports is restricted by law for 75 years.

(6) The "analytical group" described by Colonel Korotkov [in the interview in which he recounted his participation in the interrogation of U.S. POWs from Korea] was GRU. Ask the GRU about it.

E. Presentation of Sergei Nagin, Ministry of Security Official. Nagin stated:

(1) Concerning the shootdown of an RB-47 over the Barents Sea in 1960, a KGB report was sent to Khrushchev concerning the repatriation of the remains of "Olmstead," who was a member of the crew. [Participant's Note: This statement seemingly contradicts Mazyrov's contention that the KGB has no files on shootdowns -- unless they have been destroyed in the interim.]

(2) Given better specifics from the U.S. side 6 months earlier, his organization might have done a better job. Nagin also cited a range of background information on the Soviet justice and GULAG systems that was not immediately pertinent to the POW/MIA issue.

F. Presentation of Brigadier General Viktor Zaporochenko, Director, Border Guards Archives.

Zaporochenko stated:

(1) His archives hold information on various Cold War shootdowns and World War II aircraft incidents; however, his search would be easier were he to receive more detailed data from the U.S. side. [Analyst's note: Zaporochenko had not been provided with all of the information on these subjects provided by the U.S. side to its Russian counterpart.]

(2) The Border Guards archives are separate from the KGB archives.

G. Presentation of Vladimir Sokolov, Deputy Director of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archives. Sokolov stated:

(1) His archives are not automated; further, they are understaffed and under-resourced. Effective cuing by the U.S. side would be helpful.

(2) The Commission should look at Red Cross files.

H. Presentation of Valentin Sergeyevich Sviridov of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). [Note: Sviridov had served in Laos from 62-63 and 69-72, in Cambodia from 79-83, and in Vietnam from 65-68, 75-78, 89-90.] Sviridov stated:

(1) The Vietnamese strictly controlled the Laotian Communists, who could not have independently acted to keep U.S. POWs. There were North Vietnamese advisors in every Pathet Lao detachment.

(2) MFA relations with the Vietnamese were good, although travel was restricted. [Note: Sviridov's depiction of Soviet-Vietnamese relations was markedly more positive than that offered by the GRU.]

(3) Villagers said that "less than 10" Americans stayed in Vietnam voluntarily after the war.

(4) He could not recall any case of a transfer of U.S. POWs to the USSR. If it had been done, it would have been done in "very secret channels" that would not be reflected in the MFA archives.

(5) "I visited a crash site once. The aircraft was totally destroyed and left a deep crater. I have photos and some friends have photos of crash sites. I'll check my files and assist."

(6) "The Laotians told me that the number of U.S. prisoners taken by them was not great, and that they transferred them all to the Vietnamese."

(7) "My private opinion is that it's impossible for any live U.S. POWs to be in Vietnam today."

I. Presentation of Anatoli S. Voronin, MFA. [Note: Voronln first went to Vietnam as a student at Hanoi University from 63-64, then served in Hanoi from August 67-August 69, later serving as Minister Counselor at the Soviet Consulate in Danang from 87-91.] Voronin stated:

(1) He is certain there are no U.S. Vietnam-era POWs on Soviet soil. "Such an operation would have been in the competence of the intelligence community, which could not have carried it out without a decision of the Central Committee, and I know there was no such decision."

(2) "There was a very special set of controls over who could travel to Vietnam, including specialists [Note: "Specialist" is a standard Soviet/Russian euphemism for an intelligence operative]. The Central Committee was the approving authority."

(3) He had enjoyed close ties to Le Duan, General Giap, Pham Van Dong, and Le Duc Tho. He also served as Gorbachev's interpreter on a state visit.

J. Following strong statements by Ambassador Toon on the importance of clarity and openness, in the

course of which he reiterated the importance of access to sensitive archives and that the U.S. side has "no goal other than to learn about POW/MIA--NO OTHER GOAL--", General Yolkogonov responded that he agreed with "everything" stated by Ambassador Toon. Volkogonov then stated:

"We've done a lot of work, but I have an inner feeling that we have not found anything important yet. This feeling is just a sixth sense. I can't justify it by pointing to any documents--it is just a sixth sense that there remains something yet to be found that is very important."

K. TFR-Washington Analytical Comment:

(1) Elements within the Russian system know more than they have revealed to date--either to the U.S. side or to other Russian members of the Commission.

(2) If, as the information available to TFR increasingly indicates, a number (tens to hundreds) of U.S. POWs from Korea were transferred to the Soviet Union, it was an extremely well-planned and carefully-executed operation, likely done by the MGB (RGB) with at least limited GRU participation. When representatives from nonsecurity service archives claim they have no record of such transfers, they are telling the truth. Any records would have been carefully compartmentalized within the security apparatus. They may already have been destroyed. At present, the best (perhaps the only) lever to pry open this case is personal interviews with participants. As a supporting effort, TFR-Washington analysts continue to build documentary evidence that such transfers occurred.

(3) There is, presently, no evidence whatsoever that large numbers of U.S. World War II POWs held by the Germans were condemned to the GULAG system after their liberation by the Red Army. Individual cases of such treatment did occur, but often had to do with those born on Soviet soil, those U.S. citizens who fought on the German side, or those whose claims to affiliation with the U.S. were tenuous. TFR continues to keep an open mind on this issue, but evidence of the massive retention of U.S. POWs by the Soviets (as claimed, for example, in the recent book SOLDIERS OF MISFORTUNE) is lacking.

(4) In the early Cold War period, roughly from late 1945 to the Korean War, individuals affiliated with the U.S. government were abducted in Germany and Austria. Most, though not all, cases involving U.S. citizens were eventually resolved or clarified by agencies of the U.S. Government. The available archival records are not always clear. There are repeated instances of non-U.S. nationals within the GULAG who claimed to their captors and fellow prisoners that they were U.S. officers or officials in the mistaken hope of receiving their freedom or better treatment. A classic example is the "Fabian" case, in which an inmate claimed to be an American. After being tracked through various camps, upon his release he turned out to be a Czech national. Despite this, Fabian is still cited as an American victim of the GULAG whose fate remains unresolved. Despite the difficulties involved in tracking individuals after a lapse of four or more decades, TFR remains committed to investigating the case of every reported case of American service members sighted in the GULAG.

(5) The Commission is likely to learn more about the fates of U.S. aviators lost during the Cold War. On this point it seems clear that the Russians are having internal differences about how much to reveal and when. One difficulty is that the government, as well as some officials, have made categorical statements in the past and likely do not wish to see themselves contradicted before the world.

(6) Neither Russian archives or officials have, to date, provided any information indicating that U.S. POWs from Indochina were either transported to the USSR or interrogated in Indochina by Soviet representatives. The sole exception is the case of KGB agent Nechiporenko interrogating CIA operative Weaver. Unofficial channels have, however, provided two potentially significant pieces of information concerning U.S. Indochina POWs:

(a) TFR interviewed the Russian geologist, Dmitriyev, who offered extensive details on a possible live sighting of U.S. POWs in Vietnam in 1987. This information was forwarded to DIA. [See Biweekly Report for period ending 11 Sept 92.]

(b) In a third party interview quoted in the newsletter "Letters From Russia," a Russian officer stated that he had met with military retirees who recalled a "window" on the Sino-Soviet border in 1967 through which at least two vehicle loads of U.S. pilots passed. Although the chain of information is long and somewhat tenuous, TFR is actively pursuing this lead.

(7) As in the past, the most dramatic information revealed by President Yeltsin, such as his statement on the two Americans in the GULAG who were ordered to be executed under the Stalin regime, did not directly concern POWs. Further, some of the archival information promised, such as the cables passed between Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai, and Stalin on the possibility of withholding U.S. Korean War POWs, have not yet been transferred to the Commission. Much of this can be attributed to the nature of archival work--the researcher often finds something entirely different than he or she set out to find--and to the nature of bureaucracies.

MSG CITE: AMEMBASSY MOSCOW MSGS 251752Z SEP 92, 221644Z SEP 92, 222223Z SEP 92, 251809Z SEP 92, 251752Z SEP 92; Notes of Colonel Stuart Herrington, TFR; verbal report of Colonel Stuart Herrington, TFR.

4. SIGNIFICANT LETTERS/PHONE CONTACTS: Initial screening of letters received during this reporting period found no critical information. Exploitation continues. Phonecons centered around domestic support for TFR.

5. SIGNIFICANT ARCHIVES OR OTHER DOCUMENTS OBTAINED:

A. The archival and other formal data passed to the U.S. side by Russian counterparts consists of five batches totalling 187 pages, TFR numbers 15 through 19, which are composed as follows:

(1) TFR-15 consists of one page of material passed to MG Loeffke during the Joint Commission meeting on 21 Sept 92. This is A list of POW/GULAG camps in the Khabarovsk region.

(2) TFR-16 consists of 7 pages of material passed during the Joint Commission meeting on 21 Sep 92. This is a list of 59 U.S. service members shot down over Korea and who then passed through interrogation points. The TFR copy of this document is missing personnel numbers 20-26 and 35-42. Our Moscow office is requesting a complete copy of the document from the MOD archives.

(3) TFR-17 consists of 6 pages of material passed to MG Loeffke during a visit to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archives on 21 September. This material addresses three separate air incidents. The material includes a copy of a Czech demarche on an F-84 shootdown, the findings of an investigation board on a bombing of Soviet soil by a U.S. Navy bomber, and a refutation of the American version of a B-29 shootdown.

(4) TFR-18 consists of 28 pages of material passed to Ambassador Toon by President Yeltsin. There is a report on the work of the Russian side of the Joint Commission, as well as information on "Brown," alias "Clifford Charles," and information on the fate of "Isaj Oggins."

(5) TFR-19 consists of 145 pages passed to the American side during a press conference on 24 Sept. This includes archival material from the Central Archives of the Border Troops and the Central Military Medical Museum.

(6) Additionally, General Volkogonov provided the U.S. side with copies of 54 detailed interrogation reports done by the North Korean and Chinese on U.S. Korean War POWs.

B. The data accorded TFR numbers above arrived at TFR - Washington on 28 Sep 92. It is currently under translation. Due to its length, TFR has not yet been able to do a detailed analysis of the information contained in the document. This analysis will be reported in future Biweekly Reports.

C. Commission members from the U.S. side were able to visit various archives during the Moscow

meeting. Highlights included:

(1) Central Staff Archives of the Soviet Army. The Russian archivists appeared newly energized and open, and displayed several times more documents than the Commission had previously received from all other sources combined. The archivists stressed their willingness and readiness to work with the Commission, as well as their belief that working-level meetings with TFR should be held on a monthly basis. Although U.S. members did not have time to read the documents and were unable to remove or copy them, the Russian archivists called their attention to:

(a) A SMERSH ("Death to Spies") organizational directive on the handling of U.S. WWII POWs.

6. OTHER SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES: In the course of and immediately following the Joint Commission meeting in Moscow, Commission members and/or members of TFR travelled to Totma, St. Petersburg, Vorkuta and Khabarovsk.

A. The trip to Totma was made in response to yet another "tip" on "Davis Marken." The joint U.S. Russian team found absolutely no evidence that such an individual had ever been held in a camp in the vicinity of Totma.

B. The trip to St. Petersburg included visits to naval and military medical archives. The results of this trip have not yet been analyzed by TFR-Washington.

C. A Joint Commission team travelled to Vorkuta, which is, ln a sense, the early and enduring heart of the GULAG system. A report of this trip is pending.

D. Key members of the U.S. delegation and Russian escorts journeyed to Khabarovsk en route back to the United States. Although no information of immediate value was unearthed, the delegation received orientation-type briefings and was able to interview four former camp guards selected by the Russian hosts. Following the interviews, the party travelled to a labor camp for Russian and formerly-Soviet citizens.

E. Analyst's Comment: Although these trips have not yielded immediate and dramatic results, they are potentially important in that they further strengthened the precedent of Commission site visits to suspect points in the GULAG system. TFR maintains that on-site investigations away from Moscow (especially in regions such as Khabarovsk) have a very high potential pay-off. The key would be to expand these "flying visits" to include the deployment of small teams--one to two U.S. personnel along with Russian accompaniment--to key regions for periods of not less than two weeks. This would give the researcher time to get a proper feel for the area and, perhaps more importantly, would give him time to make his presence known so that locals with pertinent information could make contact. TFR strongly desires to pursue this course of action.

7. SIGNIFICANT CONUS ACTIVITIES: In addition to those activities detailed above, TFR-Washington continued to conduct intensive archival research at various U.S. facilities; sought to broaden and deepen ties with other U.S. agencies; sought to contact various sources outside of the Russian Federation and CIS who might be of value to the TFR effort; and continued the in-depth analytical effort. An additional example of the work done by TFR-Washington involves the comparison of a transliterated Russian list of US WWII internees with the list provided in the book HOME FROM SIBERIA. With a great deal of difficulty and additional archival research, TFR-Washington was able to confirm a complete match. TFR-Washington is also researching issues raised in the current book SOLDIERS OF MISFORTUNE.

8. OPERATIONAL PRIORITIES: NO CHANGE. TFR continues to operate under the operational priorities appended to our 28 August 92 report.

9. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

A. Continue to meet all reasonable Russian requests for detailed information on U.S. POW/MIAs.

B. Pursue the openings made by the Commission's site visits by sending small teams to key regional centers such as Khabarovsk, Tashkent, Novosibirsk, Ural centers, etc.

C. Pursue with the Russian side the whereabouts of Major Amirov and any other interview subjects who abruptly become unavailable.

D. Continue to raise the issue frankly when it encounters unreasonable resistance from the Russian security services; at the same time, we must continue to re-assure our Russian counterparts that we are in no respect an intelligence-collection agency.

E. Recommend that the most intense effort possible be made to uncover the facts in the case of the Stalinist Soviet Union's apparent transfer of U.S. Korean War POWs to Soviet soil. We will have to do this primarily through aggressive, imaginative "networking" that will yield candidates for personal interviews.